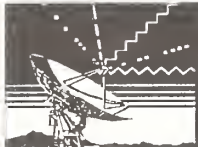


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Broadcasters Letter

United States Department of Agriculture • Office of Communications • Washington, DC 20250-1300

Letter No. 2686

November 4, 1994

ESPY SIGNS JOINT STATEMENT WITH SOUTH AFRICA -- Agriculture Secretary Mike Espy signed (October 31) an agreement with the South African government establishing a permanent channel for promoting joint agricultural efforts. The agreement indicates how USDA will cooperate with the new South African government. Areas include school nutrition, small farmer development and rural water development. Espy said, "This agreement will help to forge a new and vigorous partnership between our two democracies." Under the terms of the agreement, USDA staff will work with their counterparts in South Africa to develop and implement projects. An eight-person task force was formed to advise Espy on how USDA could assist the new South African government. **Contact: Mary Dixon (202) 720-4623.**

NEW MEAT SAFETY POLICY -- USDA is changing its policy to help the red meat industry move faster to install new technologies that reduce pathogens on raw products that can cause foodborne illness. Acting Under Secretary for Food Safety and Administrator for Food Safety and Inspection Service Michael Taylor said, "By deciding to forego prior approval on certain accepted antimicrobial treatments, we are eliminating some procedural obstacles and enabling the industry to implement safety measures as soon as possible." Taylor said plants and inspection personnel are being notified that antimicrobial rinses and hot water rinses will be allowed without prior FSIS approval. The agency will allow the new procedures after carcasses have passed inspection and prior to going into a cooler. In addition, the agency's long-term strategy and rule making will include a comprehensive review of its entire system of approving changes in facilities and equipment to see how it can be streamlined or, in some cases, eliminated. **Contact: Susan Conley (202) 720-7943.**

BARLEY AND MALTING EEP -- Deputy Secretary of Agriculture Richard Rominger announced (October 31) a multi-country package of initiatives under the USDA's Export Enhancement Program to boost sales of 2,600,000 metric tons of U.S. barley and malting barley. Sales of barley and malting barley will be made to buyers through normal commercial channels at competitive world prices. The export sales will be facilitated with cash bonus payments. The subsidy will enable U.S. exporters to compete at commercial prices in these markets. **Contact: Marlene Phillips (202) 720-2061.**

'95 UPLAND COTTON PROGRAM PROVISIONS -- USDA announced (October 31) a preliminary 7.5 percent Acreage Reduction Program (ARP) requirement for the 1995 upland cotton program. The Agricultural Act of 1949, as amended, requires the upland cotton ARP to be announced by November 1. It also requires that the program lead to a supply/use situation in which projected ending stocks approximate, as closely as possible, 29.5 percent of the projected total of domestic mill use and exports for the 1995 marketing year. Based on USDA's October supply and use estimates, USDA determined that a 7.5 percent ARP level will most likely achieve stocks meeting this ratio. The '95-crop upland cotton program provisions include: a target price of 72.9 cents per pound, a 51.92 cent-per-pound price support loan level for base quality and no paid land diversion. **Contact: Bruce Merkle (202) 720-8206.**

ALLOWING PROHIBITED FRUITS AND VEGETABLES -- USDA proposed (October 25) to allow some previously prohibited fruits and vegetables from 11 countries to be imported into the U.S. B. Glen Lee, deputy administrator for plant protection and quarantine for the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, said, "This would provide the U.S. with additional kinds and sources of fruits and vegetables while continuing to provide protection against the introduction of injurious plant pests." As a condition of entry, all fruits and vegetables would be subject to inspection, disinfection, or both at the port of first arrival as required by a USDA inspector. Also, some commodities would be required to undergo prescribed treatments for fruit flies or other injurious insects. The proposed fruits and vegetables include, currant and gooseberry from Argentina and Australia; asparagus from Austria; sage from Belize; cilantro from El Salvador, Honduras and Nicaragua; dill from El Salvador; onion and shallot from Indonesia; corn salad and lambs quarters from Peru; eggplant, kiwi and lettuce from South Korea; and jicama from Tonga. **Contact: Ed Curlett (301) 436-3256.**

FOOD FOR PEACE PROGRAM -- USDA announced (November 1) which agricultural commodities the U.S. will make available in fiscal 1995 for distribution under the USDA's Public Law 480, Food for Peace Program. The commodities eligible are: wheat and wheat products, rice and rice products, feed grains and feed grain products, dry edible beans, peas, lentils and soybean meal. Other commodities include: edible vegetable oils, soyfood products, soybeans, peanuts, potatoes and potato products, pork, Atlantic mackerel, Coastal herring, edible and inedible tallow and lard, cotton and solid wood products. Under the program, U.S. agricultural commodities are donated or sold on long-term, low-interest credit terms to foreign governments to meet humanitarian needs, assist in economic development and promote the development of foreign agricultural markets. **Contact: Priscilla B. Glynn (202) 720-3329.**

GRASSHOPPER MANAGEMENT PROGRAM -- USDA intends to prepare a programmatic environmental impact statement for its Rangeland Grasshopper Cooperative Management Program. This program protects rangeland from grasshopper and Mormon cricket infestations. These infestations have the potential for sudden and explosive population increases, which can be so extreme that all vegetation is consumed. **Contact: Ed Curlett (301) 436-3256.**

EARTHWORMS: NATURE'S SOIL DOCTORS -- Night crawlers have helped rainfall soak into the ground four times faster than plots without wormholes, according to USDA's study on soils and the ecosystem. In turn, that benefits soil health and reduces water runoff. Edwin C. Berry of USDA's Agricultural Research Service says, burrows left by the worms are nature's own system for collecting rain water in the soil where plant roots can suck it up. The wormhole system also means less water runoff that strips away valuable topsoil and deposits channels in waterways. Night crawlers and other earthworms give farmers and gardeners a free natural drainage and aeration system. **Contact: Hank Becker (301) 344-2769.**

A NEW APRICOT -- A new apricot named Helena could offer tomorrow's consumers a more colorful, plumper, tastier summer snack. Craig A. Ledbetter with USDA's Agricultural Research Service says Helena apricots are big and juicy, with deeper orange skin than most apricots. The flesh is firm and sweet, not mealy, so Helena is ideal for eating fresh or adding to summer salads. Helena apricots could appear in supermarkets in a few years. The new variety can self-pollinate. Ledbetter says that's a bonus because Helena can bear fruit without needing another variety of apricot tree nearby to furnish pollen. **Contact: Marcia Wood (510) 559-6070.**

FROM OUR RADIO SERVICE

AGRICULTURE USA # 1953 -- Aging Farmers: Farmers are waiting longer to retire, and fewer young people are getting into the farming business. John Snyder takes a closer look at this trend in this edition of Agriculture USA. (Weekly cassette -- 13-1/2 minute documentary).

CONSUMER TIME # 1434 -- New meat safety policy; talking turkey; in search of Thanksgiving; three turkeys cook a turkey; turkey bargains? (Weekly cassette -- 2-1/2 to 3 minute consumer features).

AGRITAPE FEATURES # 1944 -- Farm policy update; extended forecasts; cotton: how much land to plant; cooperating with South Africa; getting ready for new crop insurance; Eastern Europe trade forecast. (Weekly cassette -- news features).

UPCOMING ON USDA RADIO NEWSLINE -- Wednesday, November 9, U.S. crop production; world supply and demand. (Our newslines will change twice on the 9th, at 10:30 a.m. for the grains section of the crop report and supply/demand. At 5:00 p.m., the newslines will carry additional cotton and citrus reports.) Thursday, November 10, cattle and sheep outlook; fruit and tree nut outlook; world agricultural grain production; world oilseed situation; world cotton situation. **November 11 is Veteran's Day so our newslines will not change until Monday, November 14.** November 14, feed update. Tuesday, November 15, farm labor; and crop and weather update. Wednesday, November 16, milk production; vegetable outlook; and, world hunger and food aid needs. Friday, November 18, cattle on feed; and, agricultural outlook report. **These are USDA reports we know about in advance. Our newslines carry many stories every day which are not listed in this lineup.**

USDA RADIO NEWSLINES (202) 488-8358 or 8359.

COMREX ENCODED (202) 720-2545

Material changed at 5 p.m., EDT, each working day.

FROM OUR TELEVISION SERVICE

ACTUALITIES -- Secretary of Agriculture Mike Espy signs agreement with South African government establishing permanent channel for promoting joint agricultural efforts and excerpts from Secretary Espy's speech to the Commodity Club in Washington, D.C. (November 2).

UPCOMING FEATURES -- Lynn Wyvill reports on food safety tips for handling a "take-out" ready-prepared Thanksgiving feast. For those cooking their own feast, Lynn Wyvill reports on turkey food safety basics and how to safely grill a turkey. Airs on November 10 and 14.

SATELLITE COORDINATES FOR TV NEWSFEEDS:

*Galaxy 7, Transponder 9, Channel 9, Audio 6.2 or 6.8, Downlink frequency 3880 Mhz.
Available on Thursdays 3:45 - 4:00 p.m., EDT; Mondays 11:00 - 11:15 a.m., EDT.*

Comments and suggestions are welcome regarding USDA broadcast services.

Call Larry A. Quinn, (202) 720-6072; write 1618-S, USDA, Washington, D.C. 20250-1300.

OFF MIKE

HEARD AROUND THE WORLD...was a USDA radio report on Haiti done by our **Gary Crawford**. Gary recently interviewed USDA Caribbean expert, Richard Brown, about the food and farm situation in Haiti. Two weeks later Gary did a followup call and learned that a colleague of Brown's working in Kenya for the Peace Corps had written about hearing the story.

BREAKFAST TABLE BROADCASTS...by Tom Beavers and Tom Brand (KMA, Shenandoah, IA) were originated live from seven home kitchens featuring winner families as part of their October Pork Month Promotion. A local grocery chain and pork producers cooperated to serve breakfasts to lucky families. Each of seven stores had five weekly winners of \$5 pork certificates with one being chosen as a breakfast winner. Winning homes had between 10 and 20 guests, and many were introduced to the variety of pork dishes available. I suspect Tom and Tom's "fork-by-fork coverage" of these breakfasts included a few tastes for themselves.

CONSERVATION FORUM...in Salina, KS, this week with Paul Johnson, Chief, Soil Conservation Service, included broadcaster **Kelly Lenz** (WIBW, Topeka, KS) as a moderator of the morning listening session. Kelly says that fall harvest of corn, grain sorghum and soybeans is nearing completion and most wheat seeding is done. He says there is a lot of concern about current low subsoil moisture conditions.

SHARE YOUR NEWS...with us about new broadcasting techniques, interesting experiences in telling the story of food and agriculture, or unique ways that you are using our services. Write us a note or send information to the FAX number in next item.

THANKS...to those who have responded to our readership survey in the October 21 issue. Please verify that you wish to continue receiving **Broadcasters Letter** by using the form as a self-mailer or by faxing it to us at **202-720-5773**.



LARRY A. QUINN, Director
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